

PATTERNS OF NATION- STATES AND CULTURE IN THE ATLANTIC WORLD

Part 2c

1

THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR



THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR — BROAD LOOK

- Marked a defining moment in United States history
- Long-simmering tensions reached a critical stage
 - 1860-1861 → eleven slaveholding states seceded → Confederate States of America
- Political disagreement gave way to war in April, 1861
 - Confederates insisted on their right to leave the Union
 - Loyal states refused to allow them to go
- Conflict lasted four years
 - Claimed almost 1.5 million casualties → killed, dead from disease, wounded, taken prisoner
 - At least 620,000 killed in battle
 - Directly affected untold civilians
 - Freed four million black slaves

THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR — BROAD LOOK

- Social and economic system based on chattel slavery lay in ruins
- Inviolability of the Union was confirmed on the battlefield
- Longer term → preservation of the Union made possible the American economic and political colossus of the next century

PRE-WAR SOCIETY

- Debates over the expansion of slavery into federal territories created turmoil in national politics
 - Missouri Compromise of 1820
 - Wilmont Proviso of 1846
 - Free Soil Movement in 1848
 - Compromise of 1850
 - Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854
 - *Dred Scott* Decision of 1857
- Mileposts along the road to sectional disruption

PRE-WAR SOCIETY

- Outside the arena of national politics, events fed fears in the South that their slave-based social and economic systems might be in jeopardy
 - Rise of abolition movement
 - Nat Turner's bloody slave revolt in Virginia in 1831
 - Publication of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1852
 - John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry in 1859

PRE-WAR SOCIETY

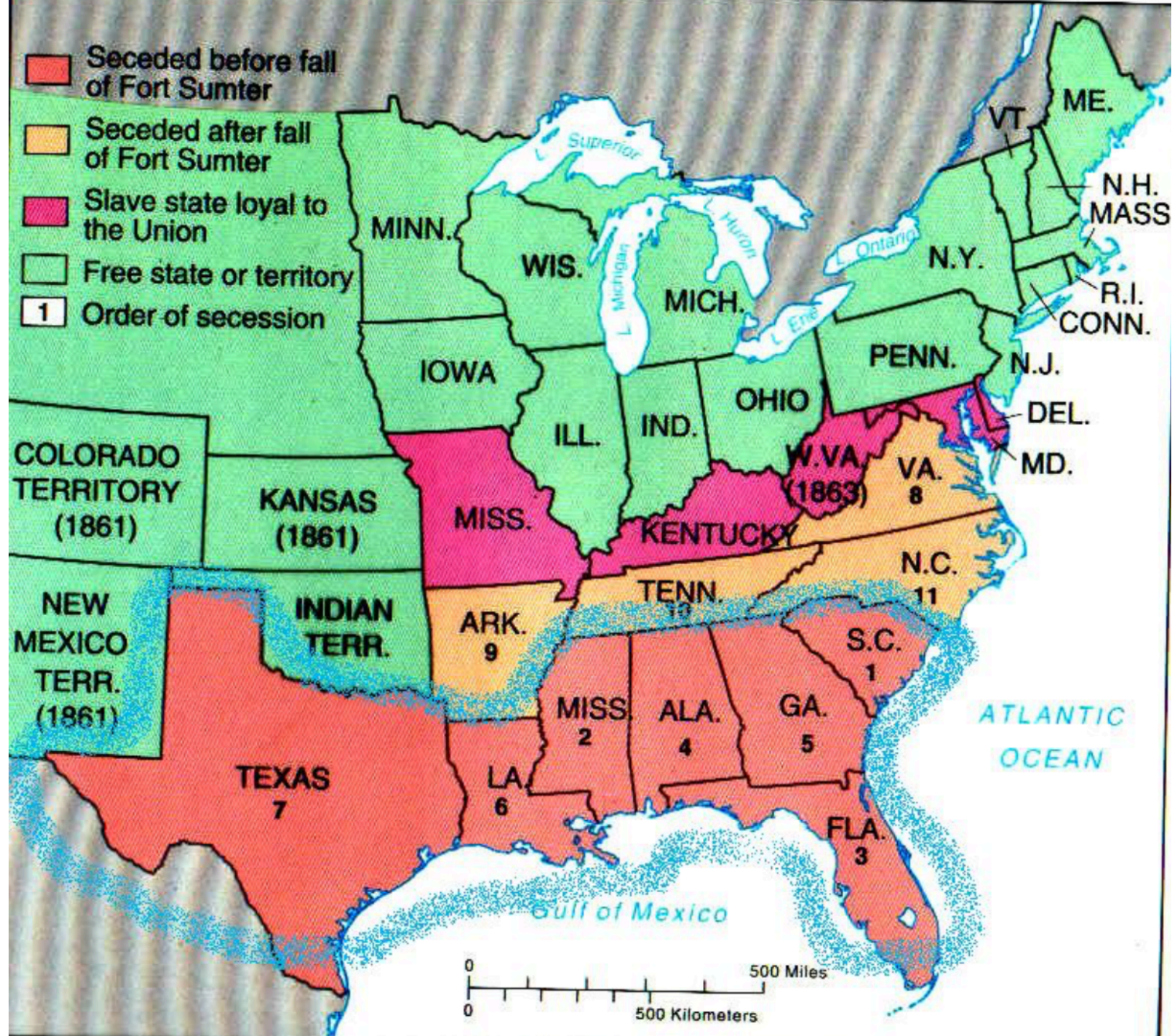
- As sectional divisions deepened, important institutions failed to act as stabilizing forces
 - Several protestant denominations split into Northern and Southern branches
 - National political parties fractured along regional lines
 - Whig Party collapsed after presidential election of 1852
 - Many Northern voters came to view the Democratic Party as pro-southern
 - Republican Party adamantly opposed extending slavery into the territories → won virtually no support in the South

PRE-WAR SOCIETY

- Historians have debated whether the North and South had become markedly different societies by 1860
 - Free-soil, free-labor North vs. agrarian South
- Others insist that the North and South were far more alike than different
- Clear that by the late-1850s many Americans *believed* that there were fundamental differences between the sections
 - Had come to distrust one another about how slavery should figure in the republic's future

SECESSION CRISIS

- Election of 1860 → triggered the secession crisis
- Lincoln and Republicans had promised not to interfere with slavery in states where it already existed
 - Firmly opposed slavery's spread to any federal territories
- Between 1860 and February 1861 → seven Deep South states seceded
 - Wanted to avoid what they perceived as a long-term threat to their interests
- Confederates fired on Fort Sumter in South Carolina between April 12 and April 14, 1861
 - Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to suppress the rebellion
- Lincoln's actions prompted four slave states of the Upper South to join those states that had already seceded
- Four other slave states – the Border States – stayed loyal to the Union



MILITARY MOBILIZATION

- Both the Union and the Confederacy mobilized on a scale unprecedented in American history
 - 1860 population of approximately 1,000,000 military-age white males → Confederacy placed between 800,000 and 900,000 men in uniform
 - 1860 population of approximately 4,200,000 military-age white males → Union placed at least 2,100,000 men in uniform
 - More than 200,000 African American men served in the Union armed forces
- The Union had decided advantages
 - Much larger population
 - Industrial capacity
 - Commercial interests
 - Financial infrastructure

MILITARY MOBILIZATION

- Despite the Union's advantages, either side could have prevailed
 - Confederacy sought independence → only had to defend itself
 - Union sought to compel the seceded states to abandon their hopes to found a new nation
- Union armies would have to:
 - Invade the Confederacy
 - Destroy its capacity to wage war
 - Crush the will of the Southern people to resist
- Confederacy could win merely by prolonging the war to a point where the loyal citizenry considered the effort too costly in lives and money

THE BATTLE IS JOINED

- First major battle of the Civil War → First Battle of Bull Run
 - Known to the Confederates as the Battle of First Manassas
 - Fought on July 21, 1861 in Virginia, about 25 miles south-west of Washington, D.C.
 - Each side had about 18,000 poorly trained, poorly led troops
- Confederate victory resulting in a disorganized retreat of the Union forces
 - Hundreds of Union soldiers taken prisoner
 - Wagons and artillery were abandoned
 - Roads back to Washington were blocked by panicked civilians attempting to flee
- Completely shocked the Union – war would be longer and costlier than anticipated
- First Bull Run/Manassas was the largest and bloodiest battle in United States history up to that point
 - Union → 460 killed, 1,124 wounded, 1,312 missing or captured
 - Confederacy → 387 killed, 1,582 wounded, 13 missing
- Casualties in later battles would dwarf First Bull Run/Manassas

MILITARY STRATEGIES

- Union and Confederate leaders adopted very different strategies to achieve victory
- 1861 → Union's Anaconda Plan
 - Naval blockade of southern ports
 - Combined Army-Navy effort to divide the Confederacy → seizing control of Mississippi River
 - Major offensives into Confederate hinterlands
- Confederacy followed a defensive-offensive strategy
 - Generally stood on strategic defensive → protected as much of their territory as possible
 - Confederacy launched offensives when conditions seemed favorable → Battles of Antietam and Perryville in 1862 and Gettysburg in 1863

WATERSHED BATTLES

- The Civil War consisted of nearly 10,500 battles, engagements, and other military actions including nearly 50 major battles and about 100 others that had major significance
 - Remainder were skirmishes, reconnaissances, naval engagements, sieges, bombardments, etc.
 - Engagements were fought in 23 different states
- The battles are divided amongst designated theaters including the Eastern Theater, Western Theater, Trans-Mississippi Theater, Gulf Coast and Sioux (Dakota) Uprising

WATERSHED BATTLES

- Second Battle of Bull Run/Second Manassas (August 28-30, 1862)
 - Confederate victory
 - Set the stage for Confederate General Robert E. Lee's first invasion of the North
 - Resulted in the Battle of Antietam
 - Union casualties – 14,462 out of 77,000; Confederate casualties – 7,298 out of 50,000
- Battle of Antietam (September 17, 1862)
 - Part of the Maryland campaign
 - First engagement in the Eastern Theater of the Civil War to take place on Union soil
 - Bloodiest single-day battle in American history → combined 22,717 dead, wounded, or missing (Union – 12,410 out of 87,164; Confederacy – 10,316 out of 38,000)
 - Tactically a draw but gave Lincoln the confidence to announce his Emancipation Proclamation

WATERSHED BATTLES

- Battle of Fredericksburg (December 11-15, 1862)
 - Fought in Virginia
 - More troops were present at this battle than at any other battle of the Civil War
 - Decisive Confederate victory
 - Decidedly lopsided in terms of casualties → 12,653 out of 114,000 Union soldiers; 4,201 out of 72,500 Confederate soldiers
 - Showed clearly how disastrous Union army's tactics were
 - Union Army and President Lincoln came under strong attacks from politicians and the press
- Battle of Gettysburg (July 1-3, 1863)
 - Fought in Pennsylvania
 - Largest battle ever fought on the North American continent
 - Marked the end of Robert E. Lee's second invasion of the North
 - Largest number of casualties of the entire war → Union: 23,049 out of 104,256; Confederacy: 28,000 out of 75,000
 - Union victory
 - Turning point in the Civil War

WATERSHED BATTLES

- Battle of the Wilderness (May 5-7, 1864)
 - Fought in Pennsylvania
 - Began bloody war of attrition by Union General Ulysses S. Grant against General Robert E. Lee
 - Battle indicated that the North's largest army would no longer retreat after a defeat
 - Began slowly pushing Lee's army back to Richmond
 - Heavy casualties → Union: 17,666 out of 124,232; Confederacy: 11,033 out of 63,000
- Battle of Appomattox Courthouse (April 9, 1865)
 - Fought in Virginia
 - Casualties → Union: 164 out of 150,000; Confederacy: 500 out of 28,000 with 27,805 surrendered and paroled
 - Last battle fought by Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia
 - Lee surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant
 - Brigadier Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain accepted the surrender
 - Not the end of the Civil War but the death knell of the Confederacy → almost four years to the day after the firing on Ft. Sumter

WATERSHED BATTLES

- Battle of Palmito Ranch (May 12-13, 1865)
 - Fought in Texas on the banks of the Rio Grande
 - Occurred more than a month after Lee's surrender at Appomattox Courthouse
 - Last engagement between organized forces of the Union Army and Confederate States Army involving casualties
 - Confederate victory
 - Casualties → Union: 143 out of 500; Confederacy: 9 out of 300

TIDES OF VICTORY

- Military fortunes ebbed and flowed for more than three years before the Union forces gained a decisive advantage
- Union states wavered more than once in their determination
 - Most notably after Lee frustrated Union offensives in Spring, 1863 and Summer, 1864
- String of Union successes won by Grant and Sherman counterbalanced Lee's successes
- By Autumn, 1864 → Union armies applied pressure in Virginia, Tennessee, and the Carolinas that eventually forced a Confederate surrender in the Spring of 1865

IMPACT OF CONFLICT

- War touched the lives of almost every American
 - Women → larger responsibilities in the workplace
 - Black slaves → shouldered major part of labor burden in the South during the war; emerged from the struggle with their freedom
- Both sides made use of recent technological advantages
 - Railroads → moved hundreds of thousands of soldiers, vast quantities of supplies
 - Telegraphic communication
 - Numerous applications of recent military technology → rifle musket, ironclad warships

IMPACT OF CONFLICT

- Union and Confederate governments expanded their powers in an effort to mount sustained war efforts
 - Both sides enacted a series of national taxes, tampered with civil liberties, and resorted to conscription
- Many of these measures provoked heated political debate, overt antiwar activities
 - Especially the drafts implemented by the Confederacy in 1862 and the Union in 1863
- War produced spending on a scale dwarfing that of any earlier period
 - 1860 → federal budget was \$63,000,000
 - 1865 → federal budget was \$1.3 billion
 - 200-fold increase that does not include the approximate \$1 billion Confederate budget

IMPACT OF CONFLICT

- Emancipation → war's most revolutionary development
 - Abolitionists, Radical Republicans pressed for it from the outset
 - The mass of Northerners always considered the conflict primarily a struggle for Union
- As fighting dragged on, Lincoln presented emancipation as a tool that would undermine the Confederacy
 - Many Democrats remained bitter opponents
 - Most of the Union citizenry eventually accepted emancipation as a tool to help win victory and restore the Union
 - Also seen as a way to punish slaveholding aristocrats who had caused the war, and to prevent slavery-related issues from posing a future threat to the nation

SIDEBAR — EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

- Emancipation Proclamation was a presidential proclamation and executive order issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863
 - Changed the federal legal status of more than three million enslaved people in ten states still in rebellion → freed as federal troops won territory
 - Excluded areas not in rebellion (Border States)
- Broadened the goals of the Civil War
 - Slavery had been a major issue that led to war, but Lincoln's only mission at the start was to maintain the Union
 - Made freeing the slaves an explicit goal of the Union war effort
 - Served to deter intervention by Britain and France

IMPACT OF CONFLICT

- Cost of the war was appalling
 - More American soldiers lost their lives than in all other wars combined from the colonial period through the last phase of the Vietnam War
 - Brought wide-scale economic destruction to the Confederate states → lost 2/3 of their assessed wealth
- Northern economy thrived
 - Between 1860 and 1870, northern wealth increased by 50%; during the same decade, southern wealth decreased by 60%
- Emancipation of enslaved people, full citizenship, and right to vote
 - Thirteenth (1864), Fourteenth (1868), and Fifteenth (1870) Amendments
- Country became “THE” United States rather than “THESE” United States

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

- President Abraham Lincoln was shot on Good Friday, April 14, 1864 while attending a play at Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C.
 - Five days after surrender of Robert E. Lee at Appomattox Courthouse
- Died at 7:22 AM on April 15
- Vice President Andrew Johnson was sworn in at 10 AM on April 15
 - Democrat from Tennessee
 - Former slave owner

RECONSTRUCTION



RECONSTRUCTION

- The twelve years after the Civil War were ones of massive changes in American culture, economy, and politics → era of Reconstruction
 - “Old West”
 - “Gilded Age” in the North
 - Events in the West and the North interwove with those in the South

RECONSTRUCTION PERIODS

- Political Reconstruction of the South progressed in two distinct eras
 - 1st → Presidential Reconstruction (1865-Spring, 1867)
 - 2nd → Radical Republican Reconstruction (1867-1877)

PRESIDENTIAL RECONSTRUCTION

- President Andrew Johnson shaped the pace and depth of the reintegration of the South
 - Johnson had defended the Union as a US senator and wartime governor of Tennessee
- President proved surprisingly lenient with white Southerners and unsympathetic to people who had been held in slavery
 - Hoped to create a national party devoted to the Union
 - Sought the support of the former leaders of the South
 - Sacrificed black Southerners' interests in the process

PRESIDENTIAL RECONSTRUCTION

- Under Johnson, white Southerners held on to all they could of the old order
 - Passed “Black Codes” → narrowly defined the possibilities for freed people, preventing them from renting land, owning firearms
 - Former Confederates violently attacked black people in New Orleans, in Memphis, in the countryside across the region
 - Rise of the Ku Klux Klan
 - White Southerners resisted the Freedmen’s Bureau, which aided impoverished whites and blacks with surplus US Army material, used special courts to adjudicate conflicts between freedmen and their former masters, and tried to prevent violence against former slaves

PRESIDENTIAL RECONSTRUCTION

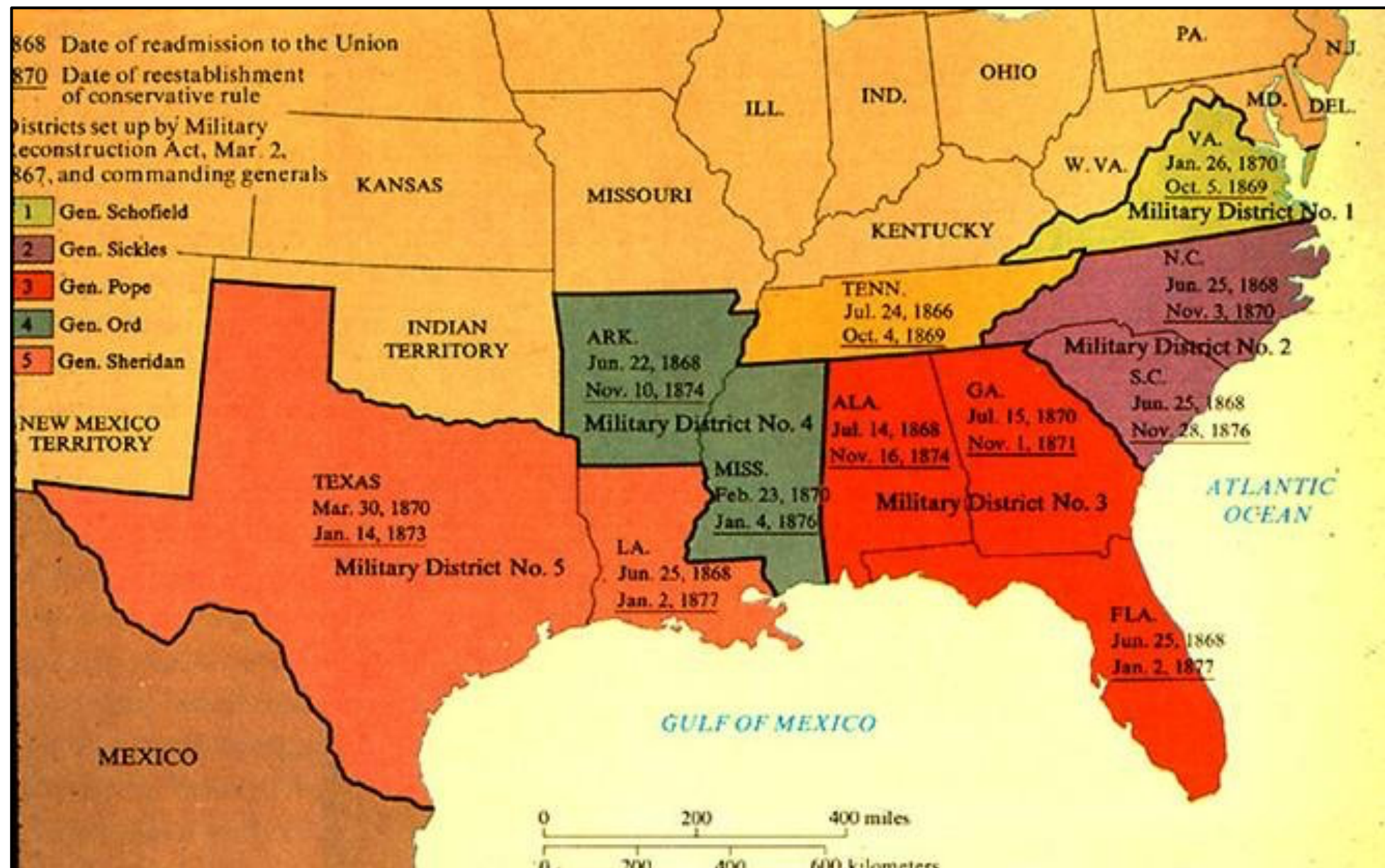
- Period of tumult after the war → former slaves and former slaveholders had to define new ways of living
 - White landowners wanted black workers to labor in gangs under close supervision
 - Freedmen wanted to work on their own
- System evolved in which landowners and landless workers shared some of the profits from the crops they produced
 - Became known as sharecropping
 - Dominated the Southern economy for generations
- Sharecropping often led the families doing the work in the fields deeper in debt over the course of the year → had no cash until the crop came in
 - When the crop was harvested (almost always cotton), the laboring families often owed more than they had earned for their work
- System induced both landowners and sharecroppers to grow more and more cotton, driving down the price and locking the South in a desperate cycle

RADICAL REPUBLICAN RECONSTRUCTION

- Political conflict and change roiled the nation
- Second era of Reconstruction began in March, 1867
 - New Republican majority in Congress pressed for much more aggressive recasting of the South
- Blatant and violent resistance of white Southerners to even the mild reforms of Presidential Reconstruction had persuaded the Northern electorate that deeper reforms were required before the Southern states could rejoin the Union
- Wing of the Republican Party, called “Radicals” by their critics, instituted a sweeping set of changes in the South

RADICAL REPUBLICAN RECONSTRUCTION

- Reconstruction Acts of 1867
 - Divided the South into five military districts under national control and run by a military governor
 - Required that each state write a new constitution giving voting rights to all men, regardless of race or prior enslaved status → constitutional conventions
 - Each state had to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution
 - Banned former Confederate leaders from holding public office
- Freedmen mobilized to vote and elected many of their number to the constitutional conventions and political positions across the South



RADICAL REPUBLICAN RECONSTRUCTION

- Republican conventions and legislatures formed in Reconstruction sought to use the power of the state to:
 - Help public education
 - Spread tax responsibility
 - Stop public whipping
 - Foster economic development
- White Southerners ridiculed, derided, and undermined every action of those bodies
- Although most Republican officeholders were white men, every instance of failure was held up as an example of the unfitness of freedmen to hold positions of public trust

RADICAL REPUBLICAN RECONSTRUCTION

- Any white man who joined with black voters and allies in the Republican Party was castigated as a traitor to his race
 - “Scalawag” – a native white Southern Republican
 - “Carpetbagger” – white Northern Republican
- Scalawags were portrayed by the Democrats as shameless men of poor character
 - Willing to sell their heritage as white men for a chance at a political office
- Carpetbaggers were portrayed as rootless adventurers so shiftless they could carry all they owned in a cheap bag made of carpet and exploiting the ignorance of black voters for their own greed
 - Received positions as governors, congressmen, or senators from Republican allies
 - Tended to be well-educated men of property, often US veterans
 - Often went to the South months or years before any prospect of office holding appeared

RADICAL REPUBLICAN RECONSTRUCTION

- Reconstruction in the South in the years after 1867 proved to be a kaleidoscope
 - Conflicting motivations coalitions, and expectations
 - Some former abolitionists came to the South to help complete the work of emancipation; other newcomers sought mainly personal economic advantage
 - Some white Southern Republicans worked in good faith alongside black allies while others spoke of their supposed comrades with open distaste
 - Some Southern Republicans advocated laws that aided business while others sought to protect the landless
- Whatever their goals, backgrounds, Republicans found themselves under relentless attack from white Democrats
 - Democrats sought to remove their opponents from power quickly and permanently

RADICAL REPUBLICAN RECONSTRUCTION

- Republican power lasted varying amounts of time in different Southern states
- Course of Reconstruction in each state depended on:
 - How quickly new constitutions were written and approved
 - How much black men and their white Republican allies could remain mobilized in the face of violence and blacklisting
 - How effective Republican political leaders were in holding on to power
- In some Southern states, Reconstruction ended quickly; elsewhere it ended in open warfare
- Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina → Reconstruction came to an end only after contested election returns in the presidential race of 1876
 - Compromise gave electoral votes to Republican candidate, Rutherford B. Hayes, who removed the troops from those last states

CHALLENGES OF RECONSTRUCTION

- Effort to recast the postwar South was up against long odds from the outset
- Reconstruction sought to complete one of the great revolutions of modern history
 - Without the benefit of overwhelming military force, modern tools of surveillance, or a contrite opponent
- Slavery in the United States had been strong and growing stronger when it suddenly ended in a vast war
- Southerners had dominated the presidency and the Supreme Court throughout the first three generations of United States history
 - Had not hesitated to use that power to suppress abolition, to force northern complicity in returning fugitive slaves, and to lay legal claim to at least half of the nation's territory
- Changing those power relations at one time was a massive undertaking

CHALLENGES OF RECONSTRUCTION

- Moreover, the three major groups in Reconstruction were divided internally
 - White North → wanted irreconcilable goals: vengeance and reconciliation, transformation and stability, justice and the status quo
 - White South → many called for peace and acceptance of the new order while others demanded relentless resistance to alien invaders
 - Black South → saw conflicts between former slaves and former free blacks, between urban and rural, between women and men, between secular and religious leaders
- Reconstruction was shaped by struggles within as well as among those groups

ENFRANCHISEMENT

- Black Southerners sustained their political power wherever they could
 - Joined with white allies when practical over the twenty years following the end of Reconstruction
 - Even elected black congressmen in the early twentieth century
 - Determined quest for democratic representation
- White southerners revised the state constitutions of the Reconstruction era around the turn of the century
 - Negated the power of the 15th Amendment
 - Stripped black men of the right to vote through poll taxes
- Despite obstacles, over the first half of the twentieth century, black men and women asserted their rights in business, churches, and schools